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AUTHORITY

AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

*20*

IN REPLY REFER TO

AD871102

AGDA (M) (15 Jun 70) FOR OT UT 701149

18 June 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 459th Signal Battalion, Period Ending 31 January 1970

SEE DISTRIBUTION

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2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

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1 Incl  
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459th Signal Battalion

ACCESSION TAG

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DATE: 10/1/71	
2	

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 459TH SIGNAL BATTALION (CA)  
APO 96240

SCCPV-NG-MT-OP

12 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lesson Learned, Headquarters, 459th  
Signal Battalion For Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CS For - 65 (R2)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Section 1. Operations: Significant Activities

a. Mission: To provide communications support to Free World Forces, Logistics Complexes, and U.S. Government Agencies in Darlac and Khanh Hoa Provinces, Republic of Vietnam. To perform other communications missions as directed by the Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group.

b. General:

(1) During the ninety-two days of this report, two (2) significant events occurred within the battalion. On 19 Dec 69 the Ban Me Thuot Bungalow Signal Site was destroyed by fire, temporarily disrupting communications; on 1 Jan 70 the 518th Signal Company (RNUHF) was reassigned to the II CTZ Signal Battalion in Cam Ranh Bay.

(2) Continued emphasis was concentrated in the following areas: quality of present communications; training utilizing in-country schools and on-the-job training; improving maintenance of all equipment; operational safety, with special emphasis being placed on motor vehicle operations.

c. Activities:

(1) Principal Staff and Command Changes:

(a) 1Lt Thomas Harrington assumed command of Headquarters and Headquarters Company from 1Lt Dennis K. Lavery on 7 November 1969.

(b) 1Lt John P. Miobrzydowski assumed the duties of the Battalion Signal Information Officer from 1Lt Antony White on 4 December 1969.

(c) Cpt George Weaver assumed command of B Company from Cpt Charles W. Russo on 19 December 1969.

(d) Cpt Peter E. Sielinski assumed command of A Company from Cpt Arthur R. Lazonby on 27 December 1969.

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(e) Maj Ashley R. Hodge assumed the duties of Battalion Executive Officer from Maj Peter Shunk on 29 December 1969.

(f) 1Lt Martin Morris assumed the duties of the Battalion S-3 Officer from Cpt Joe W. Elliott on 25 January 1970.

(g) Cpt Richard E. Hartley, S-4, departed from this command on 31 January 1970; no officer available for replacement.

(2) Distinguished Visitors:

(a) MG Thomas Reinzi visited the Hon Tre Island Signal Site specifically interested in the new ARVN Radio Site.

(b) Ron Ely, Tarzan, visited B Company, Minh Hoa, and the detachment at Duc My on 25 December 1969.

(c) Col James P. Mattern visited the Nha Trang and Hon Tre Island Signal Sites where he received an orientation on the mission and organization of these sites.

(d) BG Jack Albright visited the Hon Tre Island Signal Site on 27 January 1970, specifically interested in the functioning of the "Duffle Bag" system employed there.

d. Personnel and Administration:

(1) During this quarter the enlisted personnel strength has been very favorable, while the officers strength has become critical, due to DEROS and internal transfers within the 21st Signal Group. Presently the 459th Signal Battalion is authorized: 44 officers and has on hand 22 for a 50% fill; 10 warrant officers and has 6 on hand for a 60% fill.

(2) At the beginning of this quarter there were 988 personnel authorized with 895 on hand for a 91% fill. On approximately 1 January 1970, the 518th Sig Co (RRUH) was reassigned to the II CTZ Sig Bn reducing this battalion's authorized strength to 750 personnel; as of 31 January 1970 there were 740 personnel on hand for a 98.9% fill.

(3) A new MTOE has been received which will affect the battalion's authorized strength and will be placed into effect during the next quarter.

(4) Following is the number of awards presented by this battalion during this period:

Bronze Star	37
ARCOM	33
21st Sig Gp Certificate of Achievement	1
459th Sig Bn Certificate of Achievement	133

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(5) The following public information actions were taken during this period:

- (a) Hometown News Releases 296
- (b) News Articles 7
- (c) Number of Photos 30
- (d) Christmas TV Spots 52
- (e) Christmas Radio Spots 37

e. Operations:

(1) Radio:

(a) On 15 January 1970 the VHF system DBHO2, NHH-PHE was taken over by the Koreans.

(b) On 19 December 1969 the Ban Me Thuot Bungalow Signal Site was destroyed by fire affecting the 77UT4P, BBT14, 77UT15 systems. These systems are now reestablished at Ban Me Thuot City Strip.

(c) Hon Tre Island Signal Site constructed a new VHF building and installed a new MTC-1. This facilitates operation and maintenance due to the central location of all equipment and maintenance facilities.

(2) Wire:

(a) The cable communication in the King Duy Tan Hotel was rehabilitated. All field wire and spiral four cables were replaced with a 100 pair cable, also in house wiring was replaced.

(b) The Nha Trang Long Distance Switchboard has been deactivated. This freed an AN/MTC-9 which was turned in to the DSU at Cam Ranh Bay.

(c) Rental IBM equipment: a 867 Electrical Typewriter and a 557 Alphabetical Interpreter have been returned to IBM in New York. This equipment was no longer utilized by the communication center and its return will signify a sizable savings for the U.S. Army.

f. Training:

(1) During this period emphasis was placed on raising the standards of training by updating lesson plans and training records, cross training personnel, and formal training at the USATF school.

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(2) There were a total of sixty-one (61) personnel who attended classes at USATF, 1st Signal Brigade. These classes consisted of twelve (12) different courses dealing with operation and maintenance of signal equipment.

(3) During this period nine (9) ARVN personnel were trained in the operation and maintenance of microwave radio equipment, at the various microwave sites of the 518th Sig Co. Also during this period seven (7) ARVN personnel have been trained as maintenance personnel by the 459th Signal Battalion EMS shop.

(4) A driver training program, utilizing qualified instructors, has been initiated in this battalion. All drivers and personnel seeking drivers licenses are required to attend this driver education program.

(5) The number of formal school trained personnel this battalion is receiving is significantly below the battalion's needs. Maintenance personnel are specifically needed in this battalion.

#### g. Intelligence:

(1) During this period there were three enemy attacks: two in Nha Trang, on 17 January 1970 the BCQ area was mortared resulting in 0 WIA, and on 1 February 1970 the BCQ area and the Nha Trang Sig Bn area resulting in 0 WIA. On 29 January 1970 Ban Me Thuot Bungalow was rocketed resulting in 0 WIA, 3 rounds 122mm. Casualty status pertains only to the 459th Sig Bn.

(2) Hon Tro Island encountered considerable problems with the "Duffle Bag" equipment installed there.

(3) Through the defense plan for Camp McDermott the 459th Sig Bn received responsibility for the PCL yard. At this time the 459th Sig Bn reinforced the existing bunkers, constructed additional bunkers, and installed a new concertina fence.

(4) New concertina fencing and new bunkers were constructed at the Nha Trang Signal Sites. A new perimeter lighting system was also installed.

#### h. Logistics:

(1) During this period A Company was inspected by the 21st Signal Group CMI team, the results being satisfactory.

(2) HHC was inspected by the 21st Signal Group CMI team, the results were unsatisfactory. It was determined that proper maintenance and logs were not being kept. Corrective action has been taken to correct all deficiencies found.



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(3) The mess hall on Hon Tre Island has been rehabilitated resulting in a more sanitary and appealing mess hall.

1. Organization: The 518th Signal Company (RRUMF) was reassigned to the II CTZ Signal Battalion in Cam Ranh Bay. This reduced the battalion strength by 238 personnel, but those personnel at 459th Sig Bn sites are attached to the local unit.

2. Section 2 Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations, and Recommendations:

a. Personnel: None

b. Intelligence: None

c. Operations:

(1) Delay in Deactivating Circuits

(a) Observation: A problem encountered has been the delay in having a circuit officially deactivated once the subscriber has moved from the area.

(b) Evaluation: During the battles at Bu Prang and Duc Lap, several units moved into the Ban Me Thuot area. In addition to the normal signal support many of these units received solo user circuits. After these units departed the area it required approximately one (1) month to receive official deactivation orders. During this time this battalion was charged with the outage time for circuits that in actuality were no longer in existence.

(c) Recommendation: Recommend a procedure be established to eliminate this problem. One possibility would be for local signal units to forward a message stating when a unit has moved out of its area of responsibility and which circuits were affected. These circuits could then be carried as "deactivated pending receipt of deactivation order" at all levels of command.

(2) Circuit Restoration:

(a) Observation: After this unit's signal site at Ban Me Thuot was destroyed by fire, considerable difficulty was encountered in restoring circuits - even though a book listing all circuits and their paths was available.

(b) Evaluation: Two basic problems were encountered in circuit restoration. The first was in locating some of the subscribers. The difficulty in locating some of these subscribers was that they were listed by "nickname" such as "Metro Station," "Flight Control," etc. The second problem, which manifested itself at all levels of command, was a failure to maintain accurate circuit records. This unit was asked more than once to restore a circuit that had long since been deactivated.

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(c) Recommendation: To preclude the occurrence of problems of a similar nature, a revised circuit book is being maintained which includes official subscriber names, phone numbers, types of equipment, and terminal locations. An additional list of deactivated circuits will be maintained listing the deactivation authority.

### (3) Emergency Distribution of Regulations and Directives

(a) Observation: As a result of the fire at the MACV Bungalow compound, this unit lost its file copies of all regulations, directives, and policy letters.

(b) Evaluation: Many of the documents that were lost are essential to unit operations. The replacement flow of these documents has been extremely slow and has presented administrative as well as operational difficulties.

(c) Recommendation: It is recommended that each headquarters (e.g. Battalion, Group, Brigade) maintain a minimum of one (1) extra copy of each document published by the headquarters. If such were done, emergency distribution could be effected as required. This procedure is being implemented at this time.

### (4) Consolidation of SOP's and Policies

(a) Observation: As a result of the fire at MACV Bungalow compound, the unit lost copies of SOP's, OJT lesson plans, and policy letters.

(b) Evaluation: None of these documents were on file at Battalion Headquarters. Consequently, all of these documents had to be completely rewritten. This rewriting entailed a considerable number of man-hours.

(c) Recommendation: In the future, a file copy of all unit publications will be forwarded to Battalion. It is recommended that other units adopt a similar course of action for obvious reasons.

### (5) Company Radio Net

(a) Observation: Hon Tre Island had all FM radios entering the 459th Signal Battalion FM net during alerts.

(b) Evaluation: During an actual alert the 459th Signal Battalion FM net would be filled with traffic concerning the Battalion area in Nha Trang and couldn't be used for communication within the 228th Signal Company compound on Hon Tre Island.

(c) Recommendation: A company FM radio net has been established for the 228th Signal Company to provide communications within the compound.

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d. Organization: None

e. Training: Maximum Utilization of Formal Schooling

(1) Observation: It has been found that units are unable to utilize USATF schooling to the units maximum ability.

(2) Evaluation: Due to the great length of time school allocations must be submitted prior to the actual class, units are unable to determine availability of personnel at the time the class will begin.

(3) Recommendation: Reduce the time required for requested allocations to classes. This would greatly eliminate the problem of "no-shows" and aid the commanders in foreseeing personnel training requirements.

f. Logistics: Salvaging Electronic Equipment Shelters

(1) Observation: When an electronic shelter is damaged beyond repair it cannot be replaced in RVN; e.g. Shelter S-177.

(2) Evaluation: The equipment must be operated in a damaged shelter with faulty wiring and exposed to harsh weather. This can result in poor communications.

(3) Recommendation: The shelter should be turned in to DSU for salvage, and the company allowed to utilize Inventory Adjustment Action, DA Form 444, to inventory adjust the major end items and enter them on property records.

g. Communications:

(1) Station Ground

(a) Observation: 1600 Hz tone was interfering with all Tropo circuits.

(b) Evaluation: Several engineering consultant teams could not find the source of the trouble; however, it was noted that when the generators and the Tropo equipment were connected to a common ground, the interference stopped.

(c) Recommendation: Signal Sites should utilize a common ground for all communications and power equipment whenever possible.

(2) Elimination of Old Control (Nha Trang TCL)

12 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lesson Learned, Headquarters, 459th Signal Battalion for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RGS CS For - 65 (R2)

(a) Observation: Presently the battalion has many Army area circuits looping over 3 miles of cable in order to pass thru Old Control. The DCS circuits pass straight thru to the ICS test facility located at EE.

(b) Evaluation: The Old Control serves no function, but serves as a control facility for circuits which could more practically be controlled at the radio site.

(c) Recommendation: Old Control should be eliminated, resulting in a 3 mile circuit path reduction.

(3) Rehabilitation of North Nha Trang Cable (ACA-71)

(a) Observation: The North Nha Trang 200 pair cable was providing inadequate communications due to faulty installation. After the cable was rehabilitated in January, the results of the joint acceptance tests were found to be unsatisfactory.

(b) Evaluation: Rehabilitation was attempted since 1st Signal Brigade policy does not allow new installation in most circumstances. After many man-hours have been expended, the cable is still not acceptable.

(c) Recommendation: All cable installation projects should be strictly engineered and controlled. Inadequate cable should not be rehabilitated when both results cannot be certain and many man-hours must be expended.

(4) Cable Maintenance Responsibility in Nha Trang

(a) Observation: MACV Directive 105-3 states that the Air Force is responsible for the maintenance of all cable distribution plants in Nha Trang.

(b) Evaluation: A Company, 459th Signal Battalion, is required to repair and maintain Army installed cable in Nha Trang, though they do not have sufficient equipment, materials, and personnel, which are based on their mission.

(c) Recommendation: Either A Company's cable section should be modified so that they are prepared to work on multi-pair cable or the areas of responsibility in Nha Trang should be more precisely delineated.

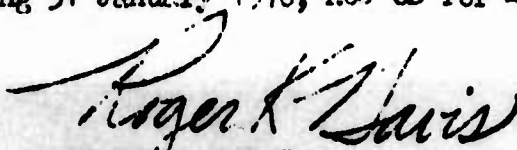
h. Material: None

i. Other: None

SCCPV-NG-NT-OP

12 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lesson Learned, Headquarters, 459th  
Signal Battalion for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CS For - 65 (R2)



ROGER K. DAVIS

LTC, SigC

Commanding

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as

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- 1 ea - CO, 43rd Sig Bn
- 1 ea - CO, 73rd Sig Bn
- 1 ea - CO, II CTZ Sig Bn

SCCPV-NG (12 Feb 70) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 459th  
Signal Battalion For Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CS-  
FCR - 65 (R2)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 21ST SIGNAL GROUP, APO 96240, 27 February 1970

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded IAW 1st Signal Brigade Supplement 1 to AR 525-15.

2. This headquarters has reviewed the basic report and concurs with the information contained therein with the following comments and/or exceptions: Paragraph 1d(1), page 2. Under the new TOE/TDA documents which will take effect on 1 March 1970, the 459th Signal Battalion's authorization will be reduced from 44 Officers to 26, and from 10 Warrant Officers to 7. The present number of officers and warrant officers assigned to the battalion is therefore in accordance with the new authorization.

  
JAMES P. MATTERN  
Colonel, SigC  
Commanding

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SCCPV-OP-AD: (12 Feb 70) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned of Headquarters, 459th  
Signal Battalion for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS  
CSFOR-65 (R2)

DA, HQ, 1st Signal Brigade (USASIRATCOM), APO 96384, 13 March 1970

TO: Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST,  
APO 96375

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with AR 525-15.

2. The following comments are made:

a. Reference item "Delay in Deactivating Circuits", para 2c(1),  
page 5:

(1) To expedite deactivation of circuits resulting from units leaving an area without requesting termination of service the site should request the coordinating station to submit an exception report. This will speed the issuance of deactivation orders.

(2) The units recommendation is concurred in for Corps Area Communications System (CACS) circuits. This authority must not be abused, however, and used as a reason in itself to carry circuits as deactivated.

b. Reference item "Training", para 2e, page 7: The 459th Sig Bn's recommendation that the lead time required for requesting allocations to USATF courses be reduced is not compatible with the time required to plan and schedule courses. The number of courses taught at the USATF and the large number of units participating in those courses dictates that scheduling be accomplished on a quarterly basis. There are procedures established for units to coordinate the revision of allocations. The 459th Sig Bn training coordinators should request revised quotas whenever necessary.

c. Reference item "Logistics", para 2f, page 7:

(1) This headquarters has received guidance from ECOM on requesting component shelters. This guidance has been passed to the units for requisition action. Shelters will be replaced by requesting the end items less electronic components.

(2) The recommendation as proposed, requires the approval of the Comptroller of the Army.

d. Reference item "Elimination of Old Control (Nha Trang TCL)", para 2g(2), page 7: Engineering has been in progress for four months to eliminate the Nha Trang Old Control. Due to the complexity of this project an extensive engineering study is required.

SCCPV-OP-AD

13 March 1970

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CSFOR-65 (12)

c. Reference item "Rehabilitation of North Nha Trang Cable (ACA-01)", para 2g(3), page 8: The 40th Signal Battalion was tasked to rehabilitate this cable. After rehabilitation the cable did meet acceptable standards. The 40th Signal Battalion is presently working on the cable. This headquarters feels the cable can be rehabilitated with a large savings to the Army. The 21st Signal Group is premature in their evaluation and recommendation.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



O. V. BONEBRAKE  
Major, AGC  
Adjutant General

CF:

Commanding General, US Army Strategic Communications Command, ATTN: SCC-  
OPS-RT, Fort Huchuca, Arizona 85613

Commanding Officer, 21st Signal Group, APO 96240

Commanding Officer, 459th Signal Battalion, APO 96240



AVHGC-DST (12 Feb 70) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lesson Learned, Headquarters, 459th  
Signal Battalion For Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CS  
For - 65 (R2)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 29 MAR 1970

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Strategic Communications  
Command- Pacific, APO 96557

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1970 from Headquarters, 459th Signal Battalion and concurs with the comments of indorsing headquarters.

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning "Delay in Deactivating Circuits";, page 5, paragraph 2c(1); concur. A ring down of all subscribers afforded service should be conducted daily.

b. Reference item concerning "Circuit Restoration", page 5, paragraph 2c(2); concur. The circuit activation request contains the proper identification and all records should be reflected accordingly. Records should be complete in that a list of deactivated circuits should be maintained for at least 90 days past inactivation.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Cy furn:  
459th Sig Bn  
1st Sig Bde

  
L. D. MURRAY  
CPT, AGC  
Assistant Adjutant General

SCCP-OP3 (12 Feb 70) 4th Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters,  
459th Signal Battalion for Period Ending 31  
January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

Headquarters, United States Army Strategic Communications  
Command-Pacific, APO San Francisco 96557 23 APR 1970

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN:  
GPOP-DT, APO 96558

1. Subject report is forwarded in accordance with AR 525-15.
2. This headquarters has reviewed and concurs with subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*Frank C. Mahin* Col Sig C  
FRANK C. MAHIN  
COL, GS  
Chief of Staff  
*Deputy Commander*

CF:  
CG, USARV, APO 96375 (wo incl)  
CG, 1st Sig Bde (USASTRATCOM), APO 96384 (wo incl)  
CO, 21st Sig Gp (USASTRATCOM), APO 96240 (wo incl)  
CO, 459th Sig Bn (USASTRATCOM), APO 96240 (wo incl)

GPOF-DT (12 Feb 70) 5th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 459th Signal Battalion for Period  
Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 27 APR 70

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Strategic Communications Command,  
Fort Huachuca, Arizona 85613

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

*D.D. Cline*  
D.D. CLINE  
2LT, AGC  
Asst AG

CF:  
DA, ACSFOR  
CG, USASTRATCOM-PAC

SCC-PO (12 Feb 70) 6th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 459th Signal Battalion for Period  
Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2)

HQ US Army Strategic Communications Command, Ft Huachuca, AZ 85613

4 MAY 1970

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

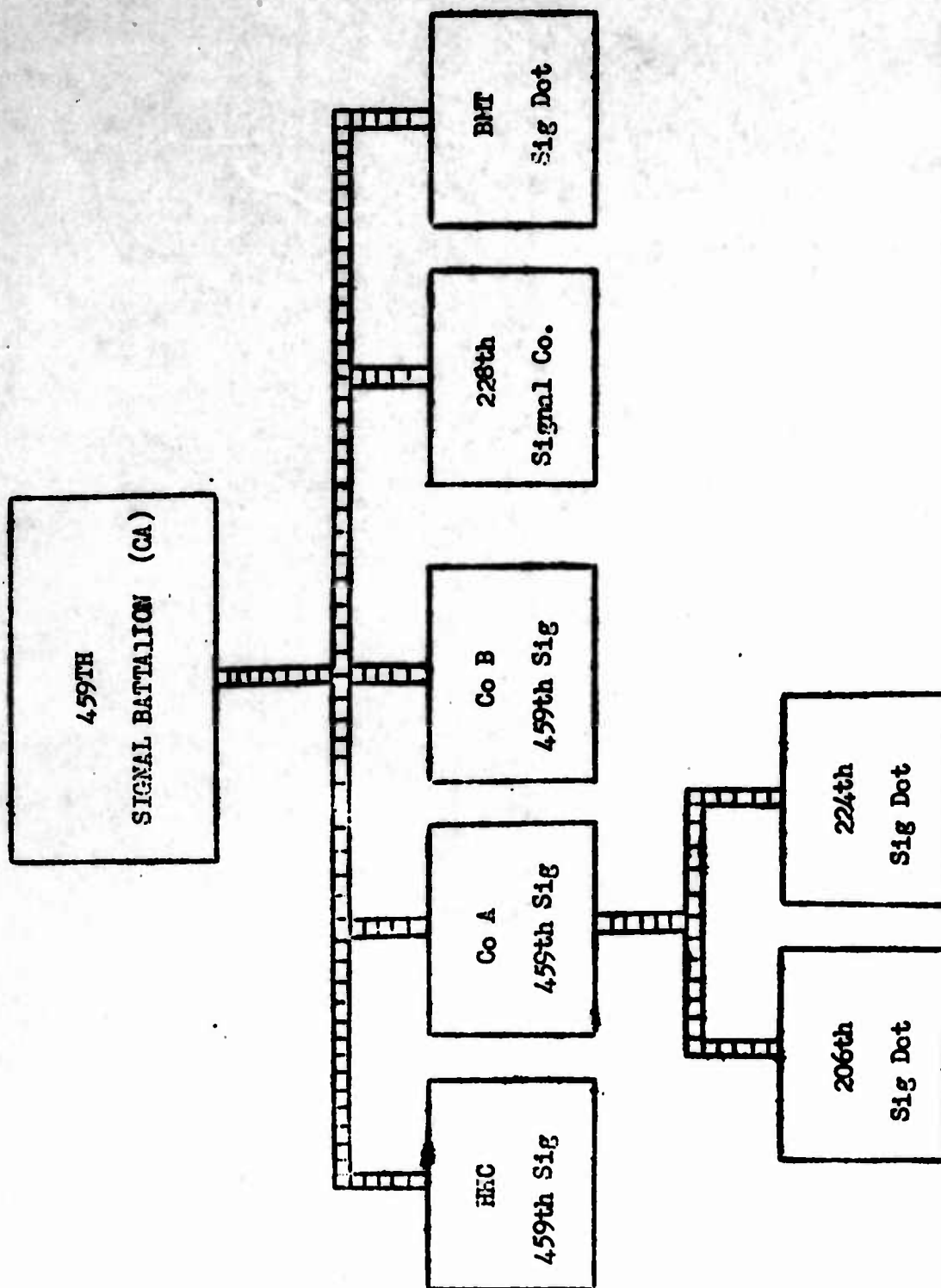
*W. O. Polston*

W. O. POLSTON

Maj, AGC

Asst Adj Gen.

Inclosure



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURAL CHART  
459TH SIGNAL BN  
correct as of: 31 Jan 70

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**DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D**

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4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)

Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Nov 69 to 31 Jan 70.

5. AUTHORSHIP (First name, middle initial, last name)

CO, 459th Signal Battalion

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OACSPOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310

13. ABSTRACT